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## Error generating factors in evaluation process

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### Abstract

Evaluation is more than an action and is defined as a pedagogical activity verification, measurement and assessment of the results achieved by the subjects (students, adults) in a certain time, school results obtained are priority as well as being the situation or situations estimated. The verification or the control represents a complex activity of knowledge of many aspects of school performance, of the factors and processes of teaching - learning that led to their production and their deployment conditions, with particular importance for teachers and students, due to its effects.

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Evaluation, definitely, represents a very important variable of the learning process, and its position has been reconsidered mostly in the last four, five decades, when there were elaborated many chapters on this topic and various researches were carried on in order to investigate a series of aspects regarding the evaluation. In the context overlooking the analyses of the relationship between the curriculum and the evaluation, the evaluation represents an integrate part of the curriculum, approaching the process of teaching-learning-evaluation in a unitary way. Any change made at the level of one of these activities influences the ways in which the others are realized, generating a genuine chain reaction, that imposes permanent recursions and reviews. For the past decades, the theory and the practice of the evaluation regarding the education’s activity had experienced some directions and accents under the impact of the development registered in the learning psychology learning field, of the scholar curriculum theory, as well as some experiences in the direction of the improving the act of evaluation so that it can provide as precise information as possible regarding the quality of the didactic step.

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Although real progress were recorded in the direction of using objective methods and techniques, designed to confer greater fidelity to the evaluation, to inspire trust, as the effectuation of the appreciation based on some well-defined norms, yet the evaluation system still presents many imperfections. This recognition entitles the conclusion that some changes and new directions regarding the evaluation practice are not only necessary and possible for the evaluation itself, but for the streamlining of the didactic process in general.

The evaluative processes in the human activity are undertaken as required actions, resulting from the need of knowing the state of the phenomenon at a certain point, the activity's state, the produced effects, as well as the amelioration of all these. It is known that the educational activity has four components (objectives, starting situations, procedures, results), all being gone through a feed-back mechanism, therefore all of them gone through an evaluation. The interest regarding the components investigation has not always been the same. In various periods, one or other part of these components was highlighted: long ago – the entrance elements (conditions, resources, human factors) and the activity results, and in a closer period – the projection actions (educational design) for that in the last decades the evaluation steps were heading forward the training-learning processes, by extending the evaluation from the results to the activity that made them.

Studying the evaluation from the social perspective it is observed that it is meant to supply with information the factors that manage the educational activity regarding the quantity and quality of the entrance elements (conditions, results), if those match the concerned objectives and the way in which they are used. At the same time, the evaluation aims to put together the society needs with the youngsters's formation system, to assure that the mission of the educational system regarding the human development is being correlated with the society's exigencies, as well as the individual aspirations. (Radu, T.I., 2000, p. 228)

From a pedagogic point of view, the evaluation is mandatory because the evaluative steps are realized as component actions of the educational activity and serve the system itself. They are being correlated with multiple situations, having different correspondents:

- First is the teacher, as the producer of the activity, to whom the evaluation provides information regarding the quality of the undertaken steps. The evaluation of the students results represents, at the same time, an indirect evaluation (autoevaluation) of the teacher's pedagogical action.
- The evaluation meanings consist in highlighting the successful aspects, and also the difficulties and the critical areas of the realized program, and in the end, in suggesting some reglementation measures designed to make the educational act as effectively as possible.
- Another receiver of the evaluative actions is the student, to whom the evaluation gives the possibility of knowing his performances level gained in proportion with the performances expected from school, efforts that are mandatory in reaching the results that are in accordance with the program objectives, like the possibility of anticipating, in a clear manner, his school and professional orientation.

Two fundamental concepts are being apprehended that are part of the normal evaluative process which is in accordance with the actual stage of the scholar evaluation development:

- The notion of an objective in relation to which we need to establish the students results
- The notion of "appreciation criteria", proper to the established objective.

The docimological paradigm was marked in time by four sequence concepts:

1. The "comparative" evaluation, whose main function was to compare and rank the students, reporting ones to the others, awarding them a diploma or other distinctions due to their level of succeeding.
2. The evaluation "through objectives" or the "criteria" evaluation having the role to provide the students with functional information, allowing them to place themselves in proportion to the achievement of the common objectives that all students have (unitary standards) and providing amelioration solutions;
3. "The corrective" evaluation, which proposes a new paradigm not only "a decisional one" but also "an informative one". Its purpose is to provide the student with additional information depending on the determined difficulties in order to facilitate its learning.
4. "The consciously" or "the formative" evaluation, which is in development and has at its foundation the recent developments from the cognitive psychology and pedagogics field regarding the integration of the evaluation into the learning process. It oscillates between cognition, as an entirety of the processes by which the student acquires and uses the knowledge and metacognition, as a process of "knowledge on self-knowledge". Consciously /formative evaluation is a new megaconception (megapoint of view). This is correlated to a dominant pedagogical step which

favourise the active participation and autonomy of the student, giving him explicit reference points, having the purpose of taking the transformation into his own hands, being aware of his own difficulties and gaps. This new and latest meaning of evaluation must be accompanied by an increase in reglementation practices but also by a fundamental modification of the mentality.

Today the necessity of an “evaluative cultures” is being more and more discussed that needs to be formed and promoted amongst the ones which are dealing with the development of the young generations. For these, some fundamental changes are necessary, first of all, regarding the mentality of the theoreticians and the practitioners from the educational field.

The essence of the changes made in the last decades of the past century, which is being continued nowadays derives from the fact that the „scholar evaluation” is more and more conceived as an integrate part of the learning process and its note”. The concept that modified the whole pedagogics of the last decades and that did not yet consume its resources is the „formative evaluation”. This (concept) sets up the evaluation as a mean of the student’s development and allows the observation of its own abilities.

Taking into consideration the modern evaluation as an integrate part of the learning process, closely associated with it, led at its detachment from the traditional „check” of the knowledge and even from the traditional scholar appreciation. The modern evaluation, which promotes the transition from the control notion of assimilating the knowledge to the evaluation concept both the learning results but especially the processes that are implied, signifies the passing from a pedagogic that transmits the knowledge to a pedagogic that assimilates the knowledge and the science of becoming. The organic integration of the evaluation in the structure of the didactic activity of the modern pedagogical concepts determines the amplification of its educational function, placing it in a key position during the instructive-educative process. This consequence derives from a natural agreement of the evaluation as a “science of value” (Cerghit, 2004, p. 287). To evaluate means, among other things, to give judgments of value, which implies taking values into consideration, and referring to a system of values.

We encounter main modernization trends of the scholar evaluation, trying to single out some of these:

The conceptual framing from the evaluative field has quantitatively enriched and has qualitatively developed; regarding the evaluation, in the daily vocabulary a multitude of new terms are frequently met, while others traditionally used have enriched their meaning, in line with the changes from the educational theory and practice plan.

The modern evaluation is being approached in terms of processes and not in ways / procedures of measuring the learning results. The classic term of „evaluation”, which gives us a mandatory and spontaneous idea about „control”, „check”, „examination”, should be replaced, not only at a terminological level, but especially as a mean of conception, through the „evaluative activity” collocation. From the modern perspective, „to evaluate” means to conduct an activity which accompanies step by step the teaching-learning process.

The introduction of the „formative evaluation” concept in the pedagogical theory and practice determined the teacher’s admonishment on the fact that their matter of study in the evaluative field, in line with the cognitive psychology ideas, should be represented with priority by the student’s learning processes and not the behaviors manifested by them as a result of learning.

Another basic idea refers to the connection of the one who learns (the student). This implies the development of the autoreflexion capacity on its own learning, the metacognitive mechanisms coming into its operation. In other words, “the knowledge on self-knowledge”.

Currently the aspiration is towards a complex evaluation, realized through a complex methodology and a diversified instrumentary. We assist at a quantitative multiplication and a qualitative increase of the evaluation devices.

In this way, the palette of the evaluation methods used by the faculty during class was extended, insistently talking about the complementation of the traditional methods (oral and written evaluations, practice tests etc) with modern, new ones (the portofolio, the project, the investigation, the autoevaluation etc), which actually represent alternatives in the current educational context, when the displacement of the accent from the learning evaluation products to the cognitive evaluation products of the students during the learning activity is being insistently required.

The system of evaluation techniques and tools has been substantially enriched. In the current evaluative practice, but also in the theoretical debates and in the specialized chapters of reference, the integration in the evaluation tests

of the objective items, semiobjective and subjective are being expressly required, in full correspondence with the complexity of the abilities and the performances targeted through programs and scholar books etc.

However, the ideal of objectivity in notation is affected by certain facts which can induce some quite considerable variations, pointed whether at the same examiner in different moments (intraindividual variability), or at different examiners (interindividual variability). Most circumstances that generates errors and oscillations in the notation concerns the teacher's activity. We will concisely analyze, forward, the most common situations and disturbing effects.

The halo effect: consists in the overestimation of certain students results, under the influence of the general good impression about them; The effect has as psychological foundation the fact that the partial impression irradiates, is extending over the whole student's personality. The students that are mostly exposed to this effect are either the best ones, or the weak ones.

The pygmalion effect: refers at the underestimation of some students's performances due to a preconceived imagine of the student. The teachers preachments not only that anticipate, but also facilitate the appearing of the conjured behaviors.

Many times, the following fact happens, the same result receives a better grade if it is followed by a lower result (in the sense that after a weak paper work, a good one is going to be better), or to receive an average grade if immediately is followed by the answers of a candidate which gave excellent answers.

The order effect: represents the appreciation of the results in proportion with the previous ones in case of progression or regression; Due to some inertness phenomenas, the teacher slightly maintains the same level of appreciation for the array of the answers that, in reality, presents some different scores.

The logic error: consists in the substitution of the evaluative's important objectives and parameters through secondary objectives, such as the accuracy and the systematization of the exposure, the effort that the student puts for preventing to certain results (being even mediocre), the conscientiously level etc. The deviation is sometimes justified, but should not become a rule.

The personal equation of the examiner: has at its foundation the realization of some differences in evaluation, so that some teachers are more generous, others more demanding; Each faculty structures its own appreciation criteria. Some teachers are more generous, using the "upper" values of the value scale, others are more demanding, exploring by choice the intermediate values or the "bottom" ones. A series of teachers use the mark as a way of encouragement, of stimulating the student, but other part of the teachers appeal at marks for measuring them in an objective way or even compelling the student to put an additional effort. Some of them appreciate more the originality of the solutions, others the accordance with the taught information. A particular assumption of the debated effect is the different exigency shown by the evaluators. The differences may be pointed out both to the same examiner, during the year of study, or between the evaluators coming from different schools.

The "contagion" effect, of interinfluence between many evaluators or with reference to the results achieved by the student in other situations;

The "generosity" effect: consists in applying some excessively high marks according to the preparation level of the students via extreme low level evaluation tests and a very low level of exigency. This kind of attitude may usually occur in cases in which the teacher is interested to show some superior results in order to receive appreciations as an academic. Also, "the generosity effect" can result from the simplistic way of rewarding the faculties activity only from the point view of the results achieved by the students at their object. From an analysis made by the students, in general, this type of error is encountered at the faculties which teach in rural districts, but not due to the reasons mentioned above; It induces clemency in terms of applying the notation in order to maintain the prestige;

The effect due to the central tendency: it objectifies into quitting to give too high or too low marks to the students from the caution of not making a mistake or because of having the will to make everybody happy, happily, this kind of tendency is rarely encountered among faculties who teach objects belonging to the technical field. (Manolescu, M., 2004, p. 182)

Some errors are facilitated by the specific of the object towards the evaluation is being made. The precise, compelling objects of study comes at a much more objective evaluation, meanwhile the social and humanist objects are prepossessed by the subjective assessment of the teacher.

The effects from the implication of the personality factors, not only the ones which depend on the teacher, but also the ones which depend on the students. The present state of mind, fatigue and the accidental factors can also influence the appearance of some errors during evaluation.

There are some ways of correcting the errors during evaluation, ways which come in handy to all those implied in this process. Among some of these we mention: the increase of share of the formative evaluation; correlating the formative evaluation with the summative one; securing the namelessness of the written tests; the introduction of some mark applying schedules; the use of standard tests and docimological tests; the processing of the results in a mathematic-statistic way; the development of the student's auto-evaluation capacity, presenting the evaluation grids and criteria; checking the students in a rhythmical manner and informing them operatively regarding their gaps in terms of knowledge or the progresses recorded by themselves; using many evaluators to correct the tests; the application of some external evaluations; combining the methods of evaluation.

## Conclusions

The quality of the evaluation realized by the teacher is directly reflected on the auto-evaluation capacities of the student.

The modern educational system requires the conception of a new evaluation frame, a new reference system having at its foundation, the formation of students' abilities. Many educational systems, including the romanian one from the past years, are aiming to develop the educational-instructive activity using as a referential the general and specific abilities which the one who learns - the student - needs to acquire during and at the end of an instruction cycle, of a year of study etc. Centering on abilities is a major preoccupation of the last years.

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